

~~SECRET~~

14 February 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. BROSS

SUBJECT: Imbroglia Occasioned by Proposal to USIB that
They Establish a Management System for COINS

1. The trouble started when the memorandum you signed to USIB proposing that they establish a management system for COINS was placed on the USIB agenda for 15 February and reached the action officers in CIA.

2. There are a number of people in CIA who do not like COINS or any other part of the Presidential Directive of 15 July 1965. I have been aware of this ever since I started work on this problem and have tried to skate around it. Until now I have been reasonably successful.

3. The CIA objections to the establishment of a management system for COINS are several. They run something like this:

a. The PFIAB was wrong in its assessment of the problems in information handling in the intelligence community and was, therefore, wrong in putting out a Presidential Directive to correct them.

b. COINS is an incorrect approach, is pushing the state of the art, and should never have been undertaken.

c. The immediate need is to get the COINS experiment over with as soon as possible, assess it and get rid of it.

d. The establishment of a management system for COINS will tend to perpetuate it.

25X1

~~SECRET~~

f. CODIB could be set up as the COINS management for the duration of the experiment. The CODIB Chairman should take on the management of the COINS experiment, working through CODIB.

4. CIA has a number of specific comments on the proposed management system itself. These were anticipated from all of the USIB members, hence my recommendations to Dick Helms, i. e., don't get into a discussion of details; get agreement in principle that a management system for COINS is needed and should be established at this time; and, refer the proposal back to you to meet with the representatives and work out the details.

5. With regard to paragraph 3 above, I have the following comments:

a. To criticize the PFIAB is fighting the problem. That battle should have been joined and fought to a conclusion two and a half years ago.

b. The just promulgated NSAM 368 is a firm and clear indication that the PFIAB is not going to go away and leave us alone. COINS will not be forgotten.

c. I cannot agree with all of the CIA criticism of COINS. They say that it could not be operational until 1970. I used the figure 1970-71 when we briefed the PFIAB. No one turned a hair. Also, I have said all along, and told the PFIAB, that COINS is an expensive and complicated experiment and that I hoped we could develop something a lot cheaper and less complicated. Cheers of encouragement.



25X1

e. And lastly, there is no reason to believe that CODIB could manage COINS, even as a full time job. They could let it rock along as at present, but manage it, no. There is neither the talented manpower nor the authority.

~~SECRET~~

6. Part of the evaluation plan for COINS must be directed to the evaluation of the COINS management structure itself. The COINS management must be required to involve itself in all aspects of management, including PP&B, if we are to get any appreciation of how this might work, or not work, in some nonexperimental system. To say you can evaluate anything as costly, complicated, and far reaching as the COINS experiment without at the same time paying heed to the organizational and management threads that hold it together and make it operate is nonsense.

7. A final factor we should all consider is this: if we let COINS rock along under a loosely knit Working Group, run an incomplete evaluation, decide it isn't worth the candle and tell PFIAB we are going to scrap it, we can predict the next step. [] with two or three of his bright young men, is going to be in our hair looking at what we have done. The lack of any firm, centralized management for COINS is going to be glaring. It was one of the first things that my naive and untutored mind took in--and they will be neither naive nor untutored. On the other hand, if we demonstrate that COINS is not feasible, even under proper management and DCI direction, we have a good case for getting rid of it and with it some of the pre-conceived notions that borned it.

25X1



25X1

~~SECRET~~